Jew

Hebrew: *jhudi*
Arabic: *yahūdiyy, ¢ibriyy*

JEWISH WOMAN
(Tunisia, ca. 1900)

A person whose religion is by definition Judaism, even if not by conviction. The definition of a "Jew" is not linked to race; Jews constitute many different ethnic groups.

The background of the name Jew continues to be discussed. The generally accepted theory is that it is the name for the inhabitants of Judah, the last surviving Jewish state. Judah was itself the name of one of 12 tribes. Other common names that were displaced by "jew" are Hebrews and Israelites.

A person who is Jewish by birth is consider such if his mother is Jewish. This is the case with Orthodox and Conservative Judaism, while Reform Judaism states that a child is Jewish if either one of the parents is a Jew.

Anyone can convert into Judaism, and become a Jew. A converted Jew is considered equal to Jews by birth. One slight

hinder is with the rabbinate of Israel which demands that the conversion has to be under the supervision of an Orthodox rabbi. This has caused problem for some groups of immigrants to Israel, but this regulation has been contested by The Supreme Court of Israel.

In general the state of Israel call its subjects Israelis, which can be any person no matter his or her religion with an Israeli citizenship.